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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 001663

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/27/2016

TAGS: PGOV KDEM CG ELECTIONS

SUBJECT: DRC ELECTIONS: SECURITY CONCERNS MINIMAL IN THE  
KASAIS

REF: A. KINSHASA 1603

¶B. KINSHASA 1212

Classified By: PolOff CBrown, reasons 1.4 b/d.

¶1. (C) Summary: Western and Eastern Kasai provinces witnessed acts of politically-related violence before and during the July 30 elections. The potential for isolated incidents remains, but security and political officials in the region do not foresee problems that could derail the October 29 elections. The more common political incidents to date have been harassment and the destruction of campaign materials.  
End summary.

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FEW CONCERNS ABOUT ELECTION-RELATED VIOLENCE  
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¶2. (U) Isolated acts of politically-related violence in the central provinces of Western and Eastern Kasai (reftel) were the only major security problems to arise during the DRC's July 30 elections. However, political and security officials in the region tell us they do not expect a recurrence for the October 29 vote.

¶3. (C) MONUC-Mbuji-Mayi Head of Office Mamady Kouyate said the political atmosphere in Eastern Kasai has quieted since the first round elections, and that Kasaians are now more welcoming of the political process. The most commonly-reported recent incidents have been stonings of MONUC and Electoral Commission vehicles and destruction of campaign posters. Kananga Mayor Mazarin Fwamba predicted the election will go smoothly if police can maintain security. Kananga's police have received additional communications and riot control equipment. Fwamba expressed confidence that police would not try to intimidate voters or contribute to any potential violence.

¶4. (C) Western Kasai's Police Inspector General Gedeon Lombo expressed concern about attacks on merchants by demobilized soldiers, but said the incidents did not appear related to the elections.

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BUT WORRY ABOUT THE POST-ELECTION PERIOD  
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¶5. (C) Eastern Kasai's Regional Military Commander General Obedi Rwibasira said he did not believe security would be an issue for the elections, but said he was worried that tensions could escalate after the vote. He said he was concerned about the post-election period, particularly when

results are announced. He expressed fear that "some politicians" may not accept the results and could try to incite the population, although he doubted they would be successful.

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POLICE LACK SUFFICIENT RESOURCES  
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**16.** (C) Security officials expressed concern about lack of resources needed to respond to any widespread insecurity. The director of the DRC's National Intelligence Agency in Eastern Kasai, Roger Kibeliso, said police in both provinces lacked adequate logistical support. Eastern Kasai's Police Inspector General Jean Oleko said that the police did not have enough gasoline for all their vehicles due to fuel shortages in the province. Lombo expressed similar worries about the mobility of Western Kasai's police forces; he said they had fewer than a dozen working vehicles in the entire province.

**17.** (C) Both police officials said they also lacked sufficient forces to fully deploy in rural areas. Each province has approximately 5,000 police officers to provide security for the electoral process. In Mweka and the surrounding area, where July 30 violence forced the closure of some voting stations, Lombo said there are just 100 police officers in place for a population of nearly 300,000.

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POLITICAL HARASSMENT MORE COMMON  
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**18.** (SBU) Political harassment of campaigners, particularly in the main cities of Kananga and Mbuji-Mayi, and the

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destruction of campaign materials by rival political groups, are the most common election-related incidents reported in the region. The most serious incident in the latest round of campaigning occurred in Lodja, when a rally of Bemba supporters was stoned by a crowd of Kabila partisans (ref A). MONUC officials in both provinces have said that otherwise campaigning has been less heated than in July.

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COMMENT: WIDESPREAD VIOLENCE AGAIN UNLIKELY  
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**19.** (C) Comment: Although police forces are stretched thin and lack resources, the improvements since July mean that they are now better prepared to prevent and react to incidents that could impede the October 29 election or destabilize the region after announcement of results. End comment.

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